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Gen. EDWARD AUGUSTUS WILD.

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BY

BRADFORD KINGMAN.

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Edw. A. Wild.

GENERAL EDWARD AUGUSTUS WILD.

Gen. Edward Augustus Wild, the son of Dr. Charles and Mary Joanna (Rhodes) Wild, was the second son and third child of his parents; born in Brookline, Norfolk County, Mass., November 25, 1825. At the time of his birth his father had entered upon a successful career in medical practice, having graduated from the Harvard Medical College in Boston. In 1818 he took up his residence in Brookline, at that day a small but thrifty farming community. At first he became an inmate of the family of a Mrs. Croft, on Washington street, who, upon finding the young doctor was successful in his profession, gave him about two acres of land on the south side of the same street on which she resided, and nearly opposite her residence, on which he immediately erected a dwelling-house, it being the elegant ground and mansion adjoining on the east, the well-known "George Baty Blake estate." Here he continued in practice for about forty years, when the same passed into the hands of Dea. William Lincoln, and later to Stephen D. Bennett, Esq., and now owned by the heirs of Arthur H. Blake.

It was on this beautiful spot, lavished by nature with beauty, and cultivated by man, that the subject of our sketch, whose name is at the head of this article, first saw the light of day. His early youth was passed under the influence of a christian home and careful training, and, not unlike many others in his day, brought up to habits of industry, attending such schools as the town afforded, and the classical school on Boylston street. He fitted for college under the private instruction of Dr. Samuel Rogers of Roxbury; entered Harvard College in 1840, graduated in 1844, having among his classmates the following persons: John Call Dalton, Professor of Physiology and Fellow of the American Academy; Benjamin Apthorp Gould, LL.D., Professor of Astronomy; Francis Parkman, LL.D., Historian; Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, the late Collector of the port of Boston; Prof. Daniel D. Slade, LL.B., now Professor of Zoölogy at Harvard College, and his friend Tappan Eustis Francis, M.D., of Brookline.

He received the degree of A.B. in due course, and A.M. in 1847; studied medicine with his father and in the office of Benjamin Eddy

Cotting, M.D., of Roxbury, also at the Harvard Medical College in Boston. He also took a course of medical study at Jefferson College, Philadelphia, Pa., where he received the degree of M.D.

He began the practice of his profession in Brookline in 1847, and became a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society May 23, 1850. Aiming at the highest honors in his profession, he crossed the Atlantic in 1848 to visit the schools of Europe, attending lectures and the practice of hospitals in Paris. While there he started on a pedestrianizing tour through Italy and Switzerland. Italy at that time was torn with a threefold war; Rome was contending against Naples; then came the invasion and occupation of Rome (which had then been temporarily a Republic), while the north of Italy was in active turmoil and strife against the Austrians. At the Romano-Neapolitan frontier Dr. Wild was arrested and closely searched by the troops on both sides of the line, each taking him for a spy for the opposite side.

At Terracina he was taken before Garibaldi, then in command, who very quickly discerned his true character and liberated him. At Forli in the Romagna he was arrested as an Austrian spy, mobbed and roughly maltreated, and had a fortunate escape with his life. On Lake Garda he was arrested at midnight as a robber, and up the River Po seized as a deserter from the Austrian army, and had many other exciting experiences, some neither safe nor agreeable. The experience he met with during this excursion gave him the first ideas of the horrors of war and the destructive effects of battles and bombardments.

On the first day of January, 1850, Dr. Wild returned to Brookline and resumed the practice of his profession as a homœopathic physician, where, with his enlarged experience and superior qualifications, he soon displayed proofs of the maturity of his talents. Here he continued till June 12, 1855, at which time he united in marriage with Frances Ellen, daughter of John Whiting and Marian (Dix) Sullivan of Boston, and upon learning of a declaration of war in the Crimea he immediately takes his bridal tour, sailing direct for Constantinople. Immediately upon his arrival at that port he tendered his services to the Turkish Government, and received a commission as (Hekimbashi) Surgeon of Artillery, with the rank and pay of lieutenant-colonel, and assumed the name of "Kholoussy Bey." In the course of his professional duties he visited the ports of Samsoun, Sinoub (Sinope), Trebizond, Batoum, Redout Kaleh (Kemhal), Kaleh.

He was attached to the army corps of Omar Pasha, Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish forces in the field, and passed the winter near Sokhoum in the foot hills of the Caucasus, occupying the hospital buildings captured from the Russians. After peace was arranged he continued in charge of extensive hospitals for several months at Trebizond, where were gathered the numerous sick and

disabled, the residuum of the war. On leaving the service, in addition to the war medal (Sefer Nishani) he received from the Sultan Abdul Medjid the decoration of the Medjidieh, with its accompanying Berat (diploma), together with an autograph letter from Omar Pasha, recommending him for that high honor.

After a long tarry at Constantinople, Dr. Wild, accompanied by his wife, visited Trebizond and the banks of the Bosphorus, and the gulf of Nicomedia (Isnikmid), the islands in the Marmora (Prinkipo), and the Troad. Returning homeward he visited Greece and the Isles of the Archipelago, stopping at Malta (where he was initiated into Free Masonry, taking three degrees in "St. John's Lodge"), Sicily, and a long time in Italy, in 1857.

Immediately upon his arrival home he resumed the practice of his profession, in which he was successful, and was fast growing in popularity, giving to the public the benefits of an extended experience in military hospitals, as well as the more complete study of medicine in the hospitals at Paris.

For ten years prior to the breaking out of the war of rebellion, Dr. Wild had a natural fondness for military drill and had been an active member of the Independent Corps of Cadets in Boston, and had never missed a single drill. When the demand came from the government for men to assist in protecting our country from the assaults on the liberties of the people, the doctor was not only fully prepared, but he commenced to prepare others for actual service in the field.

Dr. Wild was a highly intelligent gentleman, and had a full appreciation of what must ensue at an early date. A full company was raised, of men mostly from Brookline and Jamaica Plain, through the efforts and instrumentality of Dr. Wild, who was commissioned as captain of the same by Governor John A. Andrew, May 22, 1861. In this service the captain was assisted by the untiring zeal and patriotism of two of Brookline's noble young men who were fired with military ardor, and these three men did the country valiant service. We need only mention the names of the two who assisted in recruiting men for the army—Col. William L. Candler, who received a first lieutenant's commission May 25, 1861; and Col. Charles L. Chandler, a second lieutenant's commission on the same day. The last named became a captain in the Thirty-fourth Regiment August 6, 1862, lieutenant-colonel of Fortieth Regiment January 24, 1864, and of the Fifty-seventh Regiment April 20, 1864. Lieut. Col. Chandler, while in battle near Hanover Court House, fell mortally wounded May 24, 1864, and was kindly cared for by Col. Harris of the Twelfth Mississippi Regiment, and was buried near the scene of action. The Grand Army Post of Brookline perpetuates the name of Col. Charles L. Chandler by naming the same in his honor, while the other grand soldier, Col. Candler, merited the warmest praise and the regards of

his countrymen for his various and arduous services to his country. He became a colonel and member of the staff of the famous General Joseph Hooker, with whom he was on the most intimate terms of friendship.

The company above mentioned was entitled Company A, and formed a part of the First Massachusetts Regiment of Volunteers, and was the first company and the first regiment of the three years' troops from the loyal states to go to the seat of war. The headquarters of this regiment at first was in Faneuil Hall, Boston, from May 25 to June 1, 1861, when they removed to "Camp Ellsworth," in Cambridge, and afterwards, June 13, again removed to "Camp Cameron," and on the following day received orders to march.

The Brookline company were all ready for service, and anxiously waiting for orders.

On the afternoon of June 15, 1861, the regiment took up its line of march for Boston with the thermometer at 80 degrees, the men dressed in thick soldiers' uniforms. The scene on the common in Boston on that memorable day, is still vivid in the minds of thousands of persons who were present; the parting of friends, the shaking of hands, and the farewell, make it seem as almost of yesterday; now the drum calls, every ear attends. The regiment marches to the Providence Railroad station, where Alderman Pray presents them with a handsome national banner in behalf of the citizens of Boston. At nine o'clock P.M. seventeen finely decorated passenger cars with four baggage cars, drawn by two powerful locomotives, started on their journey amid the wildest enthusiasm. At Providence, they were saluted and welcomed by a detachment of the Marine Artillery. Arriving at Groton, Conn., they embarked on the steamer "Commonwealth." Here the guns of "Fort Trumbull" poured forth their welcome. Arriving at Jersey City on Sunday afternoon, they proceeded to the seat of war, passing through Baltimore on the 17th of June, being the first regiment that had passed through that city since the attack on the Sixth Regiment the 19th of April previous. At twelve o'clock on the 21st of June, the regiment formed in column and marched up the Avenue and were reviewed by President Lincoln, and went into "Camp Banks" on the Potomac. On the 17th of July, the regiment formed a part of the Army of Virginia and were in advance, to attack the enemy. After being engaged in the battles of Bull Run and Williamsburgh, and several lesser combats, including the siege of Yorktown, Captain Wild was permanently disabled by a bullet, in the right hand which was badly shattered, in the battle of "Seven Pines," on the field of Fair Oaks, Va., June 25, 1862. Returning to Massachusetts, he could not remain idle; the fire of patriotism was still burning within him, and in a short time he reported for duty. He was placed in command of "Camp Stanton," a camp of recruits at Lynnfield, Mass., and while there was promoted by regu-

lar grades to Colonel of the Thirty-fifth Massachusetts Regiment of Volunteers, August 20, 1862. Only two days later, there having been a demand for fresh troops at Washington, he returned to the capitol, with his arm in a sling from his wounds, at the head of his regiment. His fine appearance on horseback, as he passed through the streets of Boston, is well remembered by the writer. Nothing of particular interest occurred on the journey from Boston to the seat of war, except the following incident at Philadelphia, which we give from the Colonel's own report to the Governor of Massachusetts:

"In the immediate neighborhood of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon, where we were supplied with a meal by the hospitality of the citizens, there are a large number of drinking shops, which have been a pest to every regiment passing through. I personally ordered the proprietor of each establishment to sell no liquor to my men, warning him of consequences; at the same time setting a guard at his door. Soon after, detecting them enticing men in at back doors, to drink and fill canteens, I ordered the stock to be cleaned out at two places, a hotel and a saloon. The order was summarily and thoroughly carried out by my men. No serious personal violence was committed, although we had occasion to overawe a large party of Zouaves and other bullies. The police followed me with two writs of arrest, which I declined to accede to; but warned them that, if they caused us any delay, I should be obliged to take aldermen and all with me to Washington. All this, not from any wanton disrespect for municipal law, but on the ground that, in time of armed rebellion, the exigencies of the military service must take precedence of all else."

Nothing was ever heard from this afterward, although the Colonel was followed to Washington. In three weeks' time he was in front of the enemy, in Major General Burnside's Corps, and engaged in a fierce battle at South Mountain. At half past four in the afternoon, September 14, 1862, he was ordered to clear the extensive forest of sharpshooters, a very rough ground. While engaged in this work, they were unexpectedly attacked upon a position held by their brigade, in the dusk of the evening. It was here that Colonel Wild lost his left arm by the explosion of a shell, badly shattering the same, which was amputated at the shoulder, after three surgical operations. On that day, and three days later, his new regiment distinguished itself by their steady bravery, worthy of veteran troops. General Schouler writes: "Few, if any, surpass the Thirty-fifth Regiment, especially in its officers."

When Colonel Wild had partially recovered from the loss of his arm, he returned home, December 1, 1862, and while recovering from his wounds assisted Governor Andrew in organizing colored troops, the pioneer work in that line. On the 24th of April, 1863, he was appointed by President Lincoln a Brigadier General of Volunteers, and soon after proceeded to North Carolina, where he raised a brigade of colored troops from among the fugitive slaves

in that department, having his headquarters at Newberne; and it is needless to say he was entirely successful in organizing his "Corps D'Afrique," known as "Wild's African Brigade." While there he gave much time and labor to the care and permanent provision of the colored families by colonizing. On the 30th of July the General took a large number of raw colored troops to South Carolina, where they did valuable and valiant service in the siege of Charleston. Three months later, leaving his troops at Charleston, he returned to his recruiting work at Newberne, N. C., also in Virginia, Jan. 18, 1864. General Wild was placed in command of the district of Norfolk and Portsmouth, which, besides his military labors, involved large civil duties in the government of those two cities as Governor, filled as they were with a hostile population.

Upon the opening of the campaign, in the spring of 1864, he early in May joined the Army of the James, in command of his colored troops, where he continued, participating in the siege against Petersburgh and Richmond until their fall.

During the last three months he was in command of a division containing three brigades of infantry, besides cavalry and artillery, heavy and light—this being a portion of the Twenty-fifth Army Corps, composed wholly of colored troops.

On the 3d of April, 1865, he entered Richmond at the head of his troops, as "Jeff" Davis went out; many of the slaves originally recruited by the General being the first to enter those sacred precincts. At the close of the warlike operations, he served in the Freedman's Bureau in Georgia, and was finally mustered out of the United States Service, January 15, 1866.

The General finding himself too much crippled to return to the practice of his former profession, he turned his attention to *mining*, his experience and travels embracing the fields of Nevada, California, Utah, Colorado, and Lake Superior (Canada side).

It is due to General Wild to say that when he first enlisted into the Army, he enjoyed the highest esteem and confidence of all who were acquainted with him in his Massachusetts home. Particularly did he enjoy the confidence of Governor Andrew, who was a warm personal friend, during the Rebellion. When he entered the service, his experiences in the Turkish army were of great value to him. The General was of an impulsive nature, full of patriotism and intense enthusiasm, and gave his entire powers to the service. His record confirms all the statements made, and one who knew him intimately says of him, that "His bravery was only paralleled by his almost womanly modesty." No better evidence of the truth of the above statements, and of his bravery, than at "Wilson's Wharf" on the James river, Virginia. While in the command of an important outpost at the above locality, he was surrounded by a greatly superior force of cavalry under the command of Major General Fitz Hugh Lee, and was summoned to surrender, in the following language:

"By command of Major-General Fitz Hugh Lee, I am sent to demand a surrender of the Federal troops at Wilson's wharf. He (General Lee) thinks he has troops enough to carry the position. Should they surrender they will be turned over to the authorities at Richmond and treated as prisoners of war. Should they refuse, General Lee will not be responsible for the consequences.

Very respectfully your obt. servt.,

R. J. Mason, *Major and A. A. G.*

To Brig.-General Wild, commanding Federal troops."

The reply of General Wild was returned, in the following laconic manner:

"We will try it.—Edw. A. Wild, *Brig.-Gen. Vols.*"

And try it they did, and the Union Army was victorious, saving an important position to the "Army of the James." The firmness and equanimity of the mind of the General was one of his leading characteristics. Fear did not enter his mind to prevent him from carrying out his purposes; indeed it has been often said of him that he did not know the definition of the term. His mind was ever on the duty to be performed, and stopped not to weigh the risk attending the same. He had the greatest disregard of self, and was of a vivacious turn, enlivening all company into which he entered, which rendered his society peculiarly welcome to both sexes. Kindness beamed in his countenance, and benevolence warmed his heart. He was ever kind, courteous and affable, and in his profession the highest motive of his mind was to relieve the suffering of humanity by his skill, and every duty was performed with delicacy, as well as with tenderness. His friendship was firm and confiding. In his tastes simple, and averse to all hollow pretensions and ceremonial observances. He was a good scholar and distinguished as a mathematician, and a favorite in his class. He was especially fond of music, and helped to furnish the music on the big bass viol in the church choir, as well as taking a deep interest in band music.

After the General had lost his arm at the battle of South Mountain, twenty of his college class presented him with an elegant dress sword of the regulation pattern, elegantly chased and gilded, with gold cord and tassels, in a shark skin sheath; and, in furtherance of a lasting and more durable testimonial of the regard for their late classmate, his class have caused to be placed in Memorial Hall at Harvard a beautiful medallion in bronze, commemorative of the battles in which he had been engaged:—"In memory of Edward A. Wild, Brigadier General U. S. V. A Faithful and Gallant Soldier in the War which Preserved the Union and Destroyed Slavery. B. Nov. 25, 1825. D. Aug. 28, 1891. Bearing wounds received at Williamsburgh, Fair Oaks and South Mountain, His Classmates H. U. 1844 erect this Tablet.—*Et Facere, Et Pati Fortiter.*"

Those who remember General Wild as a citizen regarded him as one of strict integrity, a manly and good man. Says one who knew him well, and was his neighbor, companion and friend:

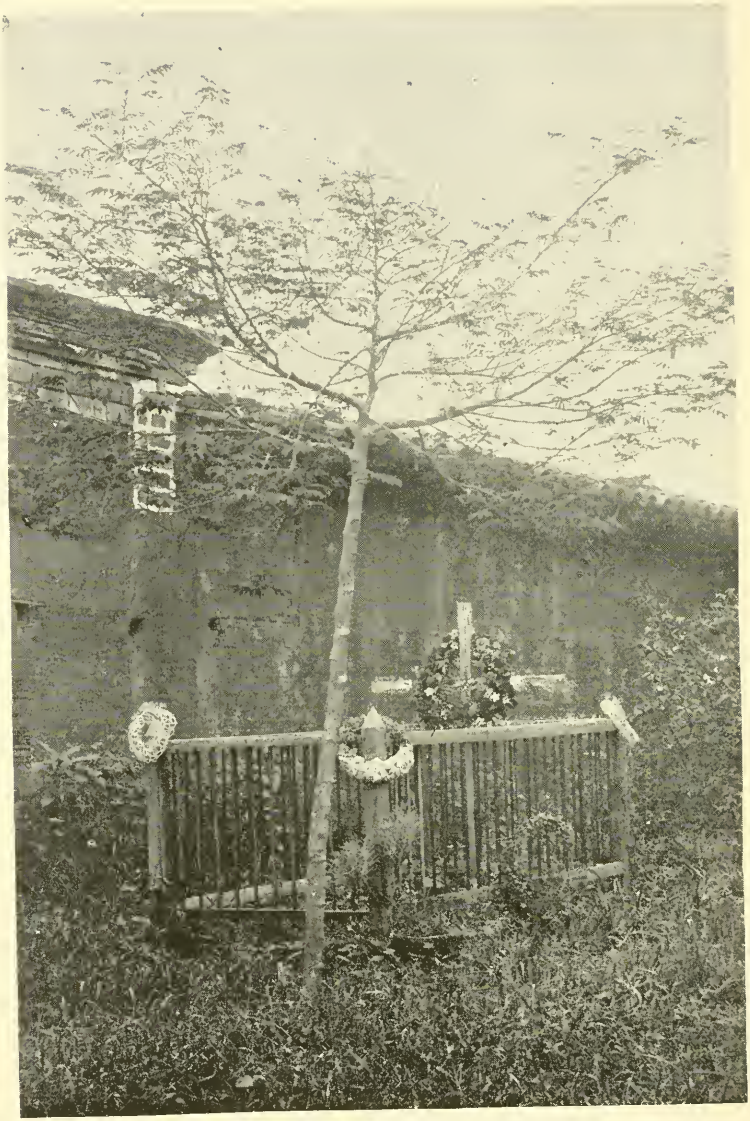
"He was a marked and original character, true to his convictions on all occasions, the personification of devotion to principle, a man of faith; he would have died a martyr for any cause he believed in and espoused. He was a leader of men, and called about him kindred spirits in his devotion to freedom and his country."

Not only was the General a good and brave soldier, but the example to his men was of the best. Prominent among his many good qualities was that of enforcing principles of abstinence from the use of intoxicating liquor. In this he set an example by his own entire disuse of liquor of any kind. During his whole service in the United States Army he never touched any intoxicants, even to a glass of cider or beer.

Those to whom his words of comfort and cheer in the hours of sickness have done so much, remember him with the kindest affection, while those under whose care they were as soldiers in the army all unite to speak of him in the warmest terms as a brave and good officer.

Much might be said of his humorous, attractive, and many social qualities, of his fondness for having a good time with all which that term applies. Having no bad habits, he was much sought after when there was any fun for the boys and young men. He was always present at the lively times, and never was happier than when he could "run with the machine" to a fire; and when there was a conflagration in the village, and he was not there, it was because he was not at home; or, if there was a wedding, he felt it his duty to help in cheering the newly-married couple by a serenade.

General Wild, after leaving the mining operations in which he had been engaged, was invited to join a party of exploration, and left New York on the first day of July, 1891, for the South American States, having in view the development of that country, and incidentally to build a railroad from Magdellena River to the city of Medillin. In this enterprise the tropical climate and the excessive heat were too much for one used to our northern clime, and especially at his time of life. His residence south was short, being less than a month, and on the 28th of August, 1891, he passed over the river, amid warm and loving friends, although away from his home, who did all that could have been to cheer and help him in his last hours. Personal and official services were freely tendered at his decease by the American Vice Consul, the Governor and other officers of State, well knowing that they were doing honor to a good man and a gallant officer. He was buried with military and masonic honors, under a military escort, and the funeral rites were performed amid a large concourse of friends, including the Governor



GRAVE OF GENERAL EDWARD A. WILD
at Medellin, Columbia, South America.

and officers of the State, who paid the honor due to his station. Kind friends laid wreaths and garlands on his coffin, and thus the last tribute of respect and regard for a distinguished man was paid, and we can only regret that our old friend, citizen, physician, captain, colonel, and general, could not have ended his last hours near the early associations of his life. He now rests in quiet seclusion at Medellin, Columbia, South America.

"He who gives his life for his country gives his own but for a higher life."

FAMILY RECORD.

Dr. Charles Wild, the father of Gen. Wild, was born in Boston, January 15, 1795, the son of Abraham and Susanna (Pitman) Wild, of good English stock, fitted for college in the Latin School of his native town, where he received a "Franklin medal" in 1805, entered Harvard College in 1811, graduating in the memorable class of 1814, of whom William H. Prescott, the historian, President Walker of Harvard College, Hon. Pliny Merrick, late Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, and other equally prominent men, were members. Received the degree of A.M. and M.D. in 1817. Graduated at the Harvard Medical School in Boston, April 10, 1818, and removed to Brookline where he resided for over forty years, a highly esteemed citizen as well as physician. He married, December 29, 1819, Mary Joanna Rhodes of North Providence, R. I.

Children:

i. Charles William, born June 10, 1822, married Mary Araminta Scales of San Francisco, Cal.

ii. Susanna Seraphina, born December 17, 1823, married George Augustus Wood of Philadelphia, Pa., March 22, 1843.

iii. Edward Augustus, born November 25, 1825, married Frances Ellen, daughter of John Whiting and Marian (Dix) Sullivan of Boston, Mass, June 12, 1855.

iv. Laura Matilda, born January 23, 1828, married Rev. Joseph H. Phipps of Framingham, Mass., January 1, 1849, and was a resident of Kingston, Mass.

v. Mary Heath, born May 6, 1829, married Edward Jarvis Cushing of North Providence, R. I., May 22, 1850.

vi. Catherine Wheaton, born July 26, 1832; died November 12, 1832.

vii. Emily Caroline, born July 14, 1834, died September 18, 1835.

viii. Walter Henry, born June 19, 1836, married Helen M. Conkling of Springfield, Mass., 1866. He enlisted in the First Rhode Island Battery, April 21, 1861. After various promotions as Lieutenant and Captain in the Second North Carolina Colored Volunteers, afterwards the Thirty-sixth United States Colored Volunteers, he was appointed aide-de-camp on General Edward A. Wild's Staff, May 14, 1863, continuing on his staff, and was detailed A. A. Gen., December 25, 1863.

ix. Lydia Greene, born May 27, 1840, died August 6, 1840.

The father died at North Providence, R. I., February 3, 1864.

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